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Reply to Office Action of April 2, 2004

REMARKS

Applicant appreciates the allowance of Claims 13 and 14.

Claim Rejections under 35 U.S.C. 102(b)

Claims 1-3, 5, 6, 8 and 12 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Yeomans et al (US 6,431,887). Applicant respectfully disagrees with Examiner for the reasons as follows.

Claim 1 defines a cable end connector assembly comprising an insulative housing, a cover enclosing a rear end of the insulative housing, and a locking member. Said locking member comprises a retaining section secured with the cover, a main section extending forwardly from the retaining section, and a locking section extending forwardly from the main section and having a latch portion adapted for locking with the complementary connector. Said insulative housing further comprises a retention portion pre-stressing the locking section.

Examiner alleged that the upper shell 12 of Yeomans et al. encloses a rear end of the lower shell 14 and a plurality of contacts 24 are received in the lower shell. As clearly shown in FIGS. 1, 4 and 10-12 of Yeomans et al., the alleged upper shell 12 is located opposite to the lower shell 14 which is different from the cover enclosing the rear end of the insulative housing defined in Claim 1. Examiner further recited that the lower shell 14 comprises a retention portion pre-stressing the locking assembly 18. Applicant believes that neither said alleged lower shell 14 nor the upper shell 12 has a retention portion pre-stressing the locking assembly 18,

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and the Examiner's interpretation is incorrect. As clearly described in line 63 of column 6, and line 8 and 63 of column 7 of Yeomans et al., the upper shell 12 defines opposed knobs 128 securely retained within holes 140 of latch assembly 18, which is different from the insulative housing comprising a retention portion pre-stressing the locking section defined in Claim 1. Therefore, Claim 1 is believed to be patentable over Yeomans et al.

Thus, Claims 2, 3, 5, 6, 8 and 12, which are respectively dependent from the Claim 1, are also allowable.

Examiner further recites Claims 4, 7, 9 and 10 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent from including all of limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

As mentioned above, Claim 1, which is dependent by Claims 4, 7, 9 and 10, is believed to be patentable. And no prior art has been found to anticipate or render obvious the presently claimed subject matter of Claims 4, 7, 9 and 10. Therefore, Claims 4, 7, 9 and 10 are also believed to be patentable.

Claim Rejections under 35 U.S.C. 103(a)

Claims 15 and 16 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Yeomans et al. (US 6,431,887).

Claim 15 defines an electrical connector assembly comprising a cable end

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connector and a complementary connector adapted to mate with the cable end connector. Said cable end connector includes a first insulative housing with a plurality of first contacts therein, and a metallic locking member attached to the first housing with a latch portion. Said complementary connector includes a second insulative housing with a forward mating tongue and a protection portion spatially located above the mating tongue in a vertical direction with an engaging opening therein. When the cable end connector and the complementary connector are mated with each other, the upper wall of the cable end connector is received between the mating tongue and the protection portion of the complementary connector under a condition that the latch portion of the locking member is latchably engaged in the engaging opening.

Yeomans et al. does not disclose the insulative housing of the complementary connector has a protection portion with an engaging opening therein. In fact, Yeomans et al. discloses a conductive receptacle assembly defining a connector opening 74, a conductive plug member 10 for connecting to the receptacle assembly in the opening 74 and a latch assembly 18 mounted to the plug member 10. The conductive receptacle assembly includes an insulative housing 60 and a shield 50 surrounding the housing 60. The plug member 10 includes an upper shell 12, a lower shell 14 and a PC equalization board 16 enclosed by the upper and lower shells 12, 14. The latch assembly 18 has a spring-bias facing plate 136 lockably engaging one wall 52 of the shield 50 of the receptacle assembly. The housing 50 includes a lower ledge 83 defining a polarizing key 84 received in a slot 174 of a bottom 161 of the plug member 10.

Rather, a reference should be considered as a whole, and portions arguing against or teaching away from the claimed invention must be considered. The

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protection portion in the instant application is provided to engage with the locking portion of the locking member, while the alleged protection portion in Yeomans et al. is only provided to guide the plug member 10 into the opening 74. Furthermore, the latch assembly 18 of Yeomans et al. engaging the wall 52 of the receptacle assembly is designed for electrically connecting the shield 50 of the receptacle assembly with the shell 12, 14 of the plug assembly 10 to achieve EMI shielding.

As mentioned above, it rearranges the opening of the shield 50 to the housing 60 in Yeomans et al., the EMI function can not be obtained between the receptacle assembly and the plug assembly 10.

In brief, there are two many differences between Yeomans et al. and the instant invention as blow.

- (I) In the instant invention, the protection portion (24) is located above the mating tongue (22) of the complementary connector (20) while in Yeomans et al. the alleged protection portion (83) is located below the alleged mating tongue (76) of socket.
- (II) In the instant invention, the upper wall of the cable connector (10) is received between the mating tongue (22) and the protection portion (24) of the complementary connector (20) while in Yeomans et al. the upper wall of the cable connector (10) is located above both the alleged mating tongue (76) and protection portion (83) rather than therebetween of the socket.
- (III) In the instant invention, the latch portion (1610) of the cable connector (10) is latchably engaged in the engaging opening (27)

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which is located in the protection portion (24) of the complementary connector (20) while in Yeomans et al. the latch portion (139) of the cable connector (10) is latchably engaged within the engaging opening (108) (referring to the specification, col. 9, lines 66-67) which is formed in the shield (50) of the socket and has nothing to do with the alleged protection portion (83).

(IV) It should be noted that the protection portion (24) is designed/named for protectively hiding the latchable engagement between the latch portion (1610) of the cable connector (10) and the engaging opening (27) of the complementary connector (20) in the instant invention. Differently, in Yeomans et al. the alleged protection portion (83) has nothing to do with the latchable engagement between the latching portion (139) of the cable connector (10) and the engaging portion (108) of the shield (50), thus totally losing the essence of its terminology.

Based upon the above (I)-(IV) differences, it proves the absence of any clear teachings of the features of Claim 15 in the cited prior art, and applicant submits that any rejection of Claim 15 on the basis of the cited prior art is improper. Therefore, Claim 15 is believed to be patentable over Yeomans et al.

Claim 16 is also believed to be patentable since it depends from Claim 15.

Claim 11 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Yeomans et al. (US 6,431,887) in view of Chow et al. (US 5,112,243).

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Claim 1, which is depended by Claim 11, defines a cable end connector assembly comprising an insulative housing, a cover enclosing a rear end of the insulative housing, and a locking member. Said locking member comprises a retaining section secured with the cover, a main section extending forwardly from the retaining section, and a locking section extending forwardly from the main section and having a latch portion adapted for locking with the complementary connector. Said insulative housing further comprises a retention portion pre-stressing the locking section.

Yeomans et al. does not disclose the cover of the cable end connector assembly encloses the rear end of the insulative housing. Yeomans et al. also fails to disclose the housing further comprises the retention portion. In fact, Yeomans et al. discloses an electrical connector comprising a conductive plug member 10 for connecting to a receptacle assembly and a latch assembly 18 mounted to the plug member 10. Said plug member 10 includes an upper shell 12 and a lower shell 14 opposite to the upper shell 12. Said latch assembly 18 includes a principle section 132, integrally formed with side flanges 134, a front plate 136 and a leading section 138. The upper shell 12 further defines a knob 146 projecting into a hole 144 of the leading section 138, without pre-stressing.

Chow et al. also fails to disclose a cable end connector assembly comprising a cover enclosing a rear end of an insulative housing and the housing further comprising a retention portion pre-stressing a locking section of a locking member.

As mentioned above, neither Yeomans et al. nor Chow et al. discloses or provides any teaching of a cable end connector assembly comprising a cover

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enclosing a rear end of an insulative housing and the housing further comprising a retention portion pre-stressing a locking section of a locking member. Even if the disclosures of Chow et al. are applied to Yeomans et al., the subject matters as defined in Claim 1 of the present invention can not be obtained. In view of the absence of any clear teachings of the feature of Claim 1 in those references, applicant believes Claim 1 is patentable over Yeomans et al. in view of Chow et al.

Applicant submits that any rejection of Claim 1 and claims depending from Claim 1 on the basis of these references is improper. Therefore, Claim 11 is also believed to be patentable since it depends from Claim 1.

In view of the above claim remarks, the subject application is believed to be in a condition for allowance and an action to such effect is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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